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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [MNUC](#) [KNNP](#) [IT](#) [IAEA](#)

SUBJECT: U/S BOLTON'S MEETING WITH ITALIANS

REF: STATE 246558

Classified By: CHARGE D'AFFAIRES EMIL SKODON FOR REASONS 1.5(B)(D)

1. (S) Summary. U/S Bolton discussed the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), North Korea, Iran and the Global Partnership with MFA DG for Political Affairs Giancarlo Aragona and other Italian MFA officials on August 27. Aragona underlined Italy's strong commitment to PSI, and agreed that the Statement of Interdiction Principles should be made public in order to foster transparency and inclusion.

He observed that the European Council has exclusive competency in some areas crucial to PSI, and agreed to develop proposals to address that factor. Italy backs US views on urging a clear and unified IAEA stance on Iranian noncompliance, and took on board our request for Berlusconi to raise the issue with Putin when he visits the PM this weekend. End summary.

2. (C) Aragona was accompanied by MFA Coordinator for Disarmament and International Security Policy Catalano and by MFA Director for Arms Control and Disarmament Formica. Aragona opened by noting with satisfaction that the EU's position on many nonproliferation issues has moved towards the USG position since Italy took the EU Presidency; progress that hasn't been easy to induce given the different interests and approaches within the EU. U/S Bolton agreed that a good foundation has been laid for the next four months, during which the US, EU and other allies will face some hard choices on WMD and nonproliferation issues.

PSI

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3. (S) Aragona stressed Italy's commitment to PSI, and pointed to the upcoming air exercise in the Mediterranean as evidence of Italy's support. Adopting the Statement of Interdiction Principles will be a key objective of the September 4 meeting in Paris, he noted. The European Commission's participation in the initiative will also need to be resolved, Aragona said, as well as the role of the European Council Secretariat. The question goes beyond the outreach debate of which countries to include when and how, he explained. The EC in particular, and the Secretariat, may have an important role in how the initiative is implemented when actual interdictions begin because the initiative overlaps with some sectors that are within the EC's exclusive competency. Including an EC representative in the Italian delegation works while Italy holds the EU Presidency but will not be a solution when Ireland, a non-PSI member, takes the reins in January, he noted. U/S Bolton suggested that the September 4 meeting would be an opportune time to find a practical arrangement that would address the issue and encouraged Italy to propose solutions. Aragona said he would discuss options with the French hosts of the meeting.

4. (S) U/S Bolton told Aragona that an experts drafting group will meet on September 3 (in addition to the military experts and intel group meetings) to finalize the Statement of Interdiction Principles to the extent possible before the plenary meeting on September 4. The objective is to publish the Statement following the meeting in order to move forward with diplomatic efforts to gain support for PSI beyond the 11 participating countries, he said. Once the Statement is published, appropriate overtures can be made to China, Russia and other interested countries to explain the initiative and allay any suspicions or concerns about the purpose and intent behind it. This approach would open the initiative to comment from a broad array, including from those countries that agree to support the PSI principles without participating in the core group. The PSI core countries could then meet again, probably in October, to review reactions to the initiative and to agree on how to formalize affiliation. Aragona agreed that outreach to China and Russia in particular would be important. It would not be constructive to create a secretive atmosphere around the PSI. He offered to raise the issue with appropriate officials during his upcoming visit to Moscow on September 10.

5. (S) Aragona questioned whether emphasizing "state and non-state actors of proliferation concern" in the PSI principles unduly limits the scope of the initiative, given that the goal is to interdict illegal trade from any source. U/S Bolton explained that ultimately this formulation was the most precise way to address the issue without inadvertently targeting legitimate transfers. For the short term, less

specificity leaves more room for the concept to evolve. It will be easier to develop effective PSI mechanisms based on the upcoming exercises and input from other countries once the PSI principles are published, he noted.

#### IRAN

16. (S) The USG hopes the IAEA Board will proceed at the next Board meeting with a resolution that refers Iran's noncompliance and failure to cooperate to the UN Security Council, U/S Bolton said. The NPT is under assault and the IAEA needs help in protecting it from Iran's lack of cooperation. Referring the matter to the UNSC sends a strong and much-needed message to Iran -- and to other states of concern such as Libya and Syria -- from the international community. Aragona agreed that international pressure has worked when applied. As EU President, Italy has demarched IAEA Board members that a clear message needs to come from the next Board meeting. U/S Bolton said it would be extremely important and helpful if Prime Minister Berlusconi could raise Iran's noncompliance with President Putin when they meet on August 29 and urge the Russians to hold firm until Iran proved willing to cooperate with the IAEA. (In a follow-up conversation with Embassy's A/Political MC, Arms Control Director Formica promised that these points would be in Berlusconi's briefing memo for the Putin visit.)

#### NORTH KOREA

17. (S) Heading into the multiparty talks this week, the USG position has not changed, U/S Bolton told Aragona: we seek the complete, irreversible, and verifiable dismantlement of North Korea's nuclear program. We may be prepared to discuss a freeze but only if it is verifiable and a step toward complete dismantlement, he added. It may be that the most the meetings produce is an agreement to meet again, possibly in October. Aragona noted that the EU has taken a firm line on the topic. Both Italy, as EU President, and Javier Solana have made it clear that the EU is ready to play a constructive role whenever it would be useful.

#### GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP

18. (C) Aragona also raised the Global Partnership initiative with U/S Bolton. He noted that President Putin will be in Rome for a state visit in early November, followed by the EU-Russia Summit. Italy is looking for ways to advance the program in order to finalize the chemical and nuclear framework agreements for the visit. While Italy has one concrete project in the chemical field getting underway, the nuclear initiatives are not as far along, Aragona said. U/S Bolton said the liability issue continues to be a serious stumbling block, particularly in the Russian MFA and Finance Ministry, and must be resolved before new projects begin. Russia wants to shift liability to the US (or other participants), in part because sovereign immunity is not well developed within Russia's court system. This approach will not work because it is inconsistent with USG practice in every other country, U/S Bolton explained.

19. (U) U/S Bolton has cleared this message.  
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